

GUIDE TO ST. LOUIS BIRDING AREAS

The St. Louis region has a variety and abundance of birdlife often surprising to the visitor. The meeting of the Missouri, Illinois and Mississippi Rivers funnels migrating birds past our doorstep. Today, as never before, "bird watching" is an increasingly popular pastime of young and old alike.

It is our hope that members and friends of the St. Louis Audubon Society will find this GUIDE a useful aid in exploring for birds, and that it will encourage further interest in the out-of-doors. As more people come to appreciate the world of nature, the desire to "conserve" our natural resources is sure to gain support.

St. Charles County

In this county, between the Missouri and Mississippi Rivers are some of the choicest, and probably the most popular year-round birding areas near St. Louis—though they are readily accessible only by automobile.

DARDENNE MARSH A private club grounds (3 sq. mi.) intersected by dirt and gravel roads not always passable by cars. Small streams, shallow lagoons, partly submerged woodland and open grassland offer cover and food for many species of hawks and woodpeckers; barred owl; rails; pheasant; swamp, song and other sparrows. In spring and fall: ducks, geese, herons, white pelicans, ibis, dowitchers, warblers and shore birds make this their resting place. This area is consistently covered during Christmas Bird Census by the St. Louis Audubon Society. Take By-pass U. S. highway 40 out of St. Louis to St. Charles, Mo. Highway 94 north to Boschertown (3 mi.); St. Charles County Highway B northwest to village of Peruque (8 mi.). The marsh is 100 yards south of Peruque, west of Highway B. Completely fenced. Permission to travel the interior road should be obtained from the resident overseer Mr. Heintzelman, of the Dardenne Hunt Club in Peruque.

MARAIS TEMPS CLAIR This too is private club property ($\frac{3}{4} \times 3\frac{1}{2}$ mi.) used by birders, as is Dardenne, by generous permission of owners, during closed season. List of species similar to Dardenne. Particularly good in spring and fall for shore and water birds. In recent years many long-eared owls reported here. Use above directions to Boschertown; then continue 7 mi. north on Highway 94. Excellent birding may be had in the marshy sections along the country roads between the marsh and the Missouri River five miles to the south.

WEBER LAKE Good winter birding for both land and water birds, due to good food supply. From Marais Temps Clair continue approx. 3 1/2 mi. northeast; then follow signs along dirt road. Lake is really an arm of the Mississippi River.

WELDON SPRING August Busch Wildlife Area, approx. 7000 acres. Many land birds in the rolling grassy slopes, oak and hickory woodlands adjacent to Missouri River bluffs. Generally good hawk territory. Nesting spot of blue grosbeak and woodcock. Numerous ponds recently built within the refuge are having beneficial effect on increasing wildlife populations. 25 mi. west of St. Louis on U.S. Highway 40-61.

St. Louis City

By citing Forest Park primarily, we do not mean to overlook the many "favorite corners" nature lovers have found within the city limits. In south St. Louis, for example, Carondelet Park and Shaw's Gardens; in north St. Louis, Chain of Rocks area; Calvary and Bellefontaine cemeteries; the sanctuary at O'Fallon Park; etc.

FOREST PARK One of the largest city parks in the country (2 sq. mi.) it is distinguished by its interesting unlandscaped forest area. Lakes and canals, open fields and hilly woodland offer variety of habitat. Annually, in April and May, the St. Louis Audubon Society invites the public to participate in the Forest Park Bird Walks, on four Sunday mornings, starting at 7:30 from Jefferson Memorial, at De Baliviere. Under expert leaders, up to 75 species have been recorded in a morning, including such birds as loon, pipit, upland plover, many warblers, hawks and ducks. Located in central St. Louis, four mi. west of the Mississippi River. Can be reached by various bus and street car lines, including Lindell Bus and Forest Park street car.

St. Louis County

Here, too, there are many fine places not listed. Jefferson Barracks and Koch Hospital grounds; Warson and Deer Creek Woods; various cemeteries. And some of the private gardens and estates have been successfully handled so as to constitute splendid sanctuary areas where wide variety of bird species can be observed. Only a few of the various bird species seen in each area are listed.

CREVE COEUR LAKE One of the best of the birding areas that are readily accessible. At south end are muddy flats and willow thickets. Excellent for summer shore birds. Wooded bluff on eastern shore is as good wood warbler country as can be found in the St. Louis region during spring and fall migrations. Terns, ducks, herons and broad-winged hawks are commonly seen. Western willets, ruddy turnstones and avocets also reported. Take Delmar bus or street car. By car, take Creve Coeur Mill Road, branching off By-pass U. S. Highway 40. The lake is south of the Mill road, 4 miles from Highway 40.

TAUSSIG ROAD Bottom land, poorly drained, providing excellent shore bird observations, from the road. Sprague's pipit, purple gallinule, king rail, sora, herons, marsh hawk seen here. By-pass U. S. Highway 40, 11 mi. west of city limits to Taussig Road, which runs north to Missouri Bottom Road.

ROCKWOODS RESERVATION (1½ x 2 mi.) State sanctuary. At some times during the year, excellent land bird territory. A state naturalist, natural history museum and well marked nature trails make for good outdoor study. U. S. Highway 50, 20 mi. west of city limits to ½ mi. beyond Pond. Turn left.

TYSON PARK Pileated woodpeckers and many sparrow species nest here. Also good for spring warblers. Meramec Valley. U. S. Highway 66, 17 mi. west of city limits.

ARBORETUM at GRAY SUMMIT, Mo. *(Missouri Botanical Society) Chiefly land birds. Blue grosbeak and lark sparrow nest here. Woodcock, red-breasted nuthatch, and prairie warbler found also. 1600 acres of Ozark fields, woodland and Meramec River bottom land. At the junction of U. S. Highways 66 and 50, 30 mi. west of city limits. *(In Franklin County not far from St. Louis County.)

East of the Mississippi

GRAND MARAIS STATE PARK popularly called Lake Park. (¾ x 2½ mi.) Flat, partly landscaped area. Generally good birding throughout the year. The European tree sparrow, which has clung to the perimeter of St. Louis since its introduction, can usually be seen in the tall weeds at the end of the bridge leading to Pittsburgh Lake Island, in the park. In fall and spring, 15 or more duck species have been observed in a day. Avocet, white-winged scoter, ruddy turnstone, Harris's sparrow and Nelson's sparrow are among the more uncommon birds recorded here. Southeast of downtown East St. Louis, bordered by U. S. Highway 460 on the south, and by Ill. State Highway 157 on the east. Driving, follow State St. to 42nd St. and turn 1 block right. State Street bus to same place.

HORSESHOE LAKE near Madison, Ill. Do not confuse with the goose refuge much further south. This lake, 5 mi. long attracts large concentrations of ducks and geese during spring and fall. U. S. Highway 40 out of East St. Louis northeast to Highway 111. Then one mile north to the Lake. Marshy wasteland along this road abounds in marsh and water birds, hawks, and European tree sparrows.

DUPO Sloughs, small flood ponds, etc. are particularly good in spring and fall for shore birds, herons and ducks. Cross Jefferson Barracks Bridge. Area between Mississippi River and Ill. Highway 3, extending northward for 4 mi.

PERE MARQUETTE STATE PARK One of the best year-round birding spots. Accommodations at the Lodge make it ideal for a weekend trip. And a weekend is really required to cover even a good portion of the river and lake shores, marshes, upland meadows and forested bluffs that make this area so richly varied in bird life. Bald eagles have nested on the bluffs as long as residents can remember and are frequently seen soaring overhead. Near the confluence of the Illinois and Mississippi Rivers, but must be reached in roundabout way—most readily, perhaps, by U. S. Highway 67, across Lewis and Clark Bridges to Alton. Northwest on Illinois Highway 100, several miles west of Grafton. Lodge guests make advance reservations, and are met at Grafton.

Swan Lake, just across the Illinois River from Pere Marquette, in Calhoun County noted for migration concentrations of ducks and geese. Take Grafton Ferry, and turn right. Interesting return trip can be via Golden Eagle Ferry to St. Charles County.

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